# An Answer
BY AN
# ANABAPTIST
TO THE
# Three Considerations
Proposed to
# Mr William Penn,
By a pretended
# BAPTIST.
CONCERNING
# A MAGNA CHARTA
FOR
# Liberty of Conscience.

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# An Answer

BY AN

# ANABAPTIST

TO THE

# Three Considerations

&c.

YOU desire, *All your Dissenting Brethren to Consider, and then Answer.*

I have Consider'd, but I cannot tell whether you suppose all *Dissenters* are your Brethren, or that all are your Brethren who dissent from you. If the first, It seems probable to me, that you have been either Educated in a strange Soyl, or have forgotten your Brothers Dialect; so that I cannot discern, that you are any otherwise a *Baptist* then only in *Masquerade*, and therefore am shy of owning the Relation: But if all that dissent from you, must therefore be reckon'd your Brethren, then I am in that Number, and because I think Mr *Penn* may not have so much leisure as my self at present to attend upon your Trifles, I intend to be in the first Rank of your Respondents.

I consider also that though you have proposed but Three Considerations, yet you have bolted out a Mulitude of Questions, which administer an occasion for as many more to be retorted.

To your first Question, Then; *What Validity or Security can any pretended or designed future New Law or Charter have, when we see so many of the present Laws we already have, may be, and are by the Dispensing Power Dispensed with?*

*So many of the present Laws*—— The Grievance then with you may lie rather in the Number, than in the Dispensing Power. His Majesty might with your leave perhaps have dispensed with some Persons, and some Penalties too, but not with so many altogether.

One would think by that you would not have Quarrel'd at the Dispensing

Diſpenſing Power, tho the Act for levying Twelve Pence a Week had never been Proſecuted, ſo as the Twenty Pound a Month had been Levied, nor if the Conventicle Act had been Diſpenſed with, ſo as the Thirty fifth of *Queen Elizabeth* had been rigorouſly Executed.

I cannot tell *how many*, but all the Laws that are Diſpenſed with, are *Penal Laws* of a like nature for matters Eccleſiaſtical: Uniformity, Sacraments, Oaths and Teſts are the Subject of them all. If this be your Grief, you muſt be either a Conforming *Baptiſt*, or ſuch a ſtrange ſort of a *Baptiſt*, as in my Forty Years Converſation among them I have never met with.

But to come more cloſe to your Queſtion, *What Validity can a New Law have, ſeeing ſo many of theſe we have already are Diſpenſed with?*

I Anſwer with a like Interrogation, I grant that the *King* may do what his Royal Pleaſure is with his own, Does it thereupon follow, that He may do ſo likewiſe with what is mine? If I acckowledge and thankfully accept His Diſpenſing with a Penalty, to which I am Obnoxious, becauſe I take a Liberty in matters of meer Religion, which I am not allowed by *Statute Laws*, Is it of neceſſary conſequence that I therein acknowledge He may alſo impoſe a Fine upon me for lawfully uſing a Liberty when granted to me by Law?

Its hoped the deſigned *New Charter* for Repeal of ſuch *Penal Laws* as are inconſiſtant with the Doctrines of *Chriſtianity*, will according to *His Majeſties Declaration*, both maintain the *National Religion*, as it is now Eſtabliſhed by Law, and provide for ſuch a *Chriſtian Liberty* as may ſet at Eaſe and Secure the Conſciences, Perſons and Properties of all that will Live Soberly, Righteouſly and Godly in this preſent Age, whether they be Conformiſts or Non-conformiſts to the *National Religion*. And a Grant remains valid, tho a Penalty may be diſpenſed with.

But what if the *New Law* ſhould have no more Validity or Security then theſe Old Ones that are Diſpenſed with? The *Diſſenters* will yet be in ſo much a better Caſe by a New Law, as that they will then be Secur'd by Law, whereas till that be done, they are always ſubject to be Ruin'd under colour of Law. But why are you ſo Querulous at the Diſpenſing Power in this particular caſe wherein it is Exerciſed? The *King* declares his Opinion, *That Conſcience ought not to be conſtrained, nor People forced in matters of meer Religion.* This Principle is the ground of his Diſpenſation. Have you not lately obſerved, That divers Gentlemen, who being in Commiſſion would not Execute theſe *Penal Laws*, and were therefore for a ſeaſon laid aſide, are now returned again into their former Stations, with Reputation, and the Love of their Neighbours? Have you not Read the Apology for the *Church of England* with relation to the Spirit of Perſecution, for which ſhe is accuſed? How their former Errors are extenuated by Inſtances, *pag.* 4. That tho the Party (in Parliament) of the *Church of England* did not perform what had been promiſed by ſome Leading Men to the

*Diſſenters*

*Diſſenters* (in procuring them a Bill of Eaſe) yet there was little or nothing done againſt them for about Nine Years; but they had their *Meetings* almoſt as publickly & as regularly as the *Church of England* had their *Churches*. Do you not remember a Vote of the *Houſe of Commons* in 1680. whereby it was Reſolved, *That the Proſecution of* Proteſtant Diſſenters *upon the* Penal Laws *was at that time Grievous to the Subject*.

Shall the *Juſtices* that did not Execute theſe Laws gain Eſteem by it? Shall the *Church of England* excuſe her ſelf from the charge of Severity by her not Executing theſe Laws for Nine Years together? Shall the *Commons in Parliament* Vote the Execution of them a Grievance? And may not the *King* extend his Compaſſion towards his Diſſenting Subjects, and ſay *They ſhall not be Executed?* To make ſuch a ſignal Act of Grace the ground of a groundleſs Jealouſie, and cauſe of Contention, to ſay no worſe of it) is highly Diſingenuous, and diſcovers a very froward and perverſe Diſpoſition: But let us conſider your next knot of Queſtions.

*Have we, or can we have any higher Power here in* England *then* King, Lords *and* Commons *in Parliament Aſſembled? The Laws that are now Diſpenſed with, and rendred uſeleſs, were they not made by that Power? Can your* New Charter *be made by any higher or other Power? Do you think there is any Temporal or Spiritual Power here in* England *above the Diſpenſing Power? And can you make it appear to us?* To theſe Queſtions you deſire Mr *Penn* would let his Brethren and you know his Mind honeſtly.

In his ſtead I Anſwer, We have no Law Makers, but *King*, *Lords* and *Commons* in Parliament Aſſembled, but yet we are in *England*, as well as in other parts of the World, under a *Law to God*, and thereby each Man is obliged to preſerve within his own Breaſt the Anſwer of a good Conſcience, from which no Law of *King*, *Lords* and *Commons* can abſolve him; and hence it is that we have many Fundamental Maximes of Law grounded upon the *Law of God*, and *common Reaſon of Mankind*, as well reſpecting the *Soveraigns Prerogative*, as the *Right of the Subject*, not written in Acts of Parliament, but in their Nature ſo invariable, *That* (as our *Lawyers* tell us) *Acts of Parliament made againſt them are void in themſelves*. And if this Opinion be true, theſe Fundamental Maximes of Law, whether in Spirituals or Temporals, tho they may be for a ſeaſon by a particular Act of Parliament interrupted, they are not thereby vacated, but ſtill retained, and will at one time or other again diſcover their Vigor. Acts not contradictory to theſe Fundamental Laws may be uſeful for a ſeaſon, but not having that innate Stability as Fundamental Maximes have, may afterwards become uſeleſs, improper and grievous to be put in Execution; hence thoſe common diſtinctions between *Malum in ſe*, & *malum prohibitum*. And ſubſequent thereto, in many caſes a power or no power of Diſpenſing. That which is unlawful in it ſelf to be done, as *Murther*, *Theft*, *Treſpaſs*, and the like, cannot be made

lawful

lawful by any Law or Diſpenſation whatſoever. That which is lawful in it ſelf, but becomes unlawful, becauſe prohibited by a particular Statute, may be Diſpenſed with, ſo as no particular Perſon be Damnified by that Diſpenſation, and not otherwiſe. Among the many Viciſſitudes of Succeſſion to the *Crown*, between the two Houſes of *York* and *Lancaſter*, Do you think there were no Laws in being, made in the Raign of a King of one of theſe Branches (in Fact) diſpens'd with by his Succeſſor of the other Branch, till they came to be Repealed in Parliament? Were the *Oathes of Fidelity and Obedience* made to the Line Interrupted, required to be taken by all *Judges*, *Juſtices*, *Sheriffs*, and other *Officers* Commiſſionated by the other Line which ſucceeded, until they were Repealed in Parliament? In the various changes of the *National Religion*, between the Reigns of *King Henry* the the Eighth and *Queen Elizabeth*, were all Penalties impoſed by Laws reſpecting Religion, exacted without any Relax or Suſpenſion, till thoſe Laws were Abrogated in Parliament. In the firſt Year of *King Henry* the Fourth a whole Parliament held in the Twenty firſt of *Richard* the Second was Repealed: In one of which Laws then made, divers Pains of Treaſon were ordained, whereby, as the Act of Repeal ſays, *No Man did know how he ought to behave himſelf to Do, Speak or Say for doubt of ſuch Pain*; and if that Law had been Religiouſly obſerved till the moment of its Repeal It could never have been repealed. In the Second Year of *Richard* the Third, a Statute made in the Firſt of the ſaid *King* was Diſpenſed with by *Proclamation*. Now I would gladly hear what cauſe my pretended Brother *Baptiſt* has to Quarrel at his preſent *Majeſties* gracious Diſpenſing with Laws inflicting Temporal Penalties for Eccleſiaſtical Matters, and rendring them uſeleſs for the preſent, in that reſpect only, till they can be Repealed in Parliament. And wherein the exerciſe of this Diſpenſing Power has exceeded what has been in Fact done by his *Royal Predeceſſors*, and admitted may be lawfully done by our greateſt *Lawyers*. But to proceed,

*Vaughans Rep. pag. 353.*

*Shall your* New Charter *have a Penalty inſerted to be inflicted on the Infringers or Breakers of it or no? If not, What will your* New Charter *ſignifie? Not three skips of a Lowſe: And if it hath a Penalty, Cannot any King by his Prerogative and Authority Royal Diſpence with the Penalty? And what will it ſignifie then?*

This pretended *Baptiſt's* Reſolution of the firſt of theſe Queſtions is as Weak as it is Idle, and both that and the others, may receive a ſatisfactory Anſwer.

Such a *New Charta* as is deſired, if no Penalty be annex'd, may be very ſignificant in many reſpects, (1) It may be materially good and obliging to Obedience by its innate Vertue, on pain of Condemnation by the Divine Law; and in that reſpect of greater ſignification, and much more deſirable then ſuch Laws as are materially Bad, and cannot be obeyed without Breach of the *Law of God*. (2) This *New Charter*

*Charter* may, without annexing any Penalties, Repeal all those Penalties, by which Persons are compelled to perform Acts of Divine Worship, contrary to their Understanding, Faith, and a Good Conscience, and put it out of the Power of any Dispensation to revive those Laws, or to impose Penalties of the like kind. (3) Such a *New Law* may without any Penalties by its simple Declarations put an issue to that, which is now unreasonably made the ground of all our Contests, and confirm to us all those Laws by which our Liberties and Properties are preserved.

But presuming it may also have Penalties inserted to be inflicted on the Infringers or Breakers of it, These may be so qualified as not to be Dispensed with; (if under the colour thereof evil minded Men do not practice upon the Soveraign Power: For in such a case, if the Soveraign Power cannot Dispence with the Penalty of a *Statute Law*, it may be divested of such means as are necessary for its own Preservation, (but in any ordinary case, if any Person or Body Corporate receive particular Damage by the breach of such a *New Law*, He or They may if the Legislators please, be Intitled to a particular Action by the same Law, and recover Damages against the Breakers of it, at the *Kings* Suit, by Indictment, or Presentment, or by a Special Action, with which the *King* cannot Dispence.

*Vaughans Rep. pag. 334, 342.*

The Instance you give, to put us out of Doubt, in Mr *Langhornes* Words, touching the *Kings* Right in Dispensing with *Penal Laws*, I shall not Repeat, but only observe, That the Opinion you cite (however you may do it in scorn) carries such an Evidence in it for a Dispensing Power (not in ordinary Cases, as that Author has well observed) but upon extraordinary Occasions, when the *King* in his Wisdom shall find it necessary, as calls for more Cunning then I yet perceive in you, to raise any material Objection against it.

Qu. *Now where is the assurance then of Mr* Penn's *New Charter?*

*Ans.* Our Assurance will lie not only in the Authority of the Legislators, equal to any other Law, but also in the Authority of the Matter, which will command an Assent in every Mans Conscience assoon as he reads it, *Not to do that to another, which he would not have done to himself.* Our Assurance will be in our Love and Affection One towards Another, as Neighbours concern'd to promote the common Interest of the Realm. In the Watchfulness of all Parties against any one particular Faction, if any such should rise up, and attempt to inthrall the Consciences of all the rest, in our thankful and dutiful Behaviour towards our Soveraign for breaking off those intolerable Yoaks we could not bear, and setting us upon such a lasting Foundation, both for our Civil and Religious Liberties, as with a discreet Care and Managemant of them may remain firm to Perpetuity.

Qu. *But who can tell what King we*

*may*

*may have after our present* Soveraign *whether so mercifull, or so just? Or what* Sheriffs *the next* King *may chose, and what Returns of* Parliament Men *they may make? For you know the Forfeiture on the* Sheriffs *making a false Return is no great matter, and cannot a* King *pardon it by his Dispensing Power or Authority Royal? What will, nay what can your new* Charter *then signifie, when it either is or may be, (according to your own Doctrin) Invalidated, Disanulled, or Annihilated in an instant.*

*Ans.* If there should be raised by my Quereſt, or any other like him, such a perverse Spirit and behaviour in any Party of Men, as to prevent the Nations selted enjoyment of these Priviledges we now have as Men and Christians, by his Majesties Prudence, Justice and Clemency, who can tell (indeed) what the sad Consequences of it may be? But if Duty, Reason and common Interest prevail, here is nothing offer'd that should cause any Man to slack his utmost diligence and endeavours to arrive at the Settlement proposed by a *New Charter*. For what do these Queries tend to, or what of any weight do they contain? For,

First, Does William Penn, or any party of Dissenters propose any such Methods to be persued, as may advance Prerogative to that degree, as to Invalidate, or Annihilate all our Laws?

Secondly, Is not the National Religion, as it is Stiled in the first place to be maintained, and as well secured, as any old or new Law can make it, with such a Liberty for consciencious Dissenters from it in the worship of God (Exploding of all Lisenciousness) as may free them from future inconvenience upon account of Religion.

Thirdly, Is any thing suggested that by a new Charter, greater power should be given to the King for chooling of Sheriffs, then now he has, or that the penalties upon a Sheriffs making false Returns, shall be less then now they are? or any thing else to render our Case worse then it is.

You take it for granted, *I know*, that which I do not know, nor your self neither, as I suppose, that the *Sheriffs* Forfeiture, who shall make a false Return is no great matter, or that which the *King* can pardon, or dispence with. The Case of Sr *Samuel Barnardiston* wherein he had a Verdict and Eight Hundred Pounds damage given against a *Sheriff* for a false Return, may inform you otherwise; and certainly a *new Charter* will not make it less Penal then now it is, but if it should ever happen, notwithstanding a *new Charter*, as it has heretofore happen'd notwithstanding our *old Charter*, that Knights and Burgesses should not be duly chosen; the same Fate may attend such a Parliament, as did that of 38 *H.* 6.

I now come to your ſecond Conſideration, wherein you pray Mr *Penn* to conſider, *What his* New Charter *can ſignifie, ſo long as there is a High Commiſſion Court, or a high Commiſſion for Eccleſiaſtical Affairs ſet up? Cannot thoſe Commiſſioners take any of your and our Preachers, Teachers, or Miniſters to Task when they pleaſe? Cannot they, when they have a mind to it, ſuſpend Mr* Pen, or George Whitehead, *Mr* Alſop, *Mr* Lobb, *Mr* Mead, *or Mr* Bowyer, *as well as the* Biſhop of London, *&c. Cannot the Court when they will, or ſhall think fit, or be commanded, ſuſpend, ſilence or forbid any or all the Diſſenting Miniſters to Preach any longer in their Meetings, if they will not Read any Declaration or Order whatever, that the King ſhall ſet forth and require them to Read? Remember the* Magdalen Colledge Men; *Remember alſo that Sawſe for a* Gooſe *is or may be Sawſe for a* Gander.

*Anſ.* The caſe of *Magdalen Colledge* is publiſhed at large, you may Read it if you pleaſe, and Anſwer it if you can, eſpecially the paralel caſe in *Edwards* the Sixth time. But pray what is that to a *New Charter?* If wrong Judgment was given by the Court (as you perhaps ſuppoſe) in that caſe, do you make no difference between Diſpenſing with a Law, and wrong Judgment given againſt a Law (if any ſuch ſhould be) in *Weſtminſter Hall* or the *Eccleſiaſtical Court*

If the *Diſſenters* you name, or you who pretend to be a *Baptiſt*, be of the *Clergy of England* in the Eye of the Law, and hold Eccleſiaſtical Affairs and Benefits, they or you may for Miſ-behaviour be ſuſpended from them by the Eccleſiaſtical Commiſſioners. But why do you fancy that a *New Charter* (by which it is expected that Penalties for matters of meer Religion will be repealed) ſhould be made to ſignifie nothing, by the Eccleſiaſtical Commiſſioners which now are; I can eaſily fore-ſee that a *New Charter* may make that Commiſſion in the caſes you meution to ſignifie nothing; but I cannot imagine how that Commiſſion ſhould make a *New Charter* inſignificant. As to the ſilencing of Diſſenting Miniſters, its evident as the Law now is, their reading or not reading the *Kings Declaration* in their Meetings will not prevent it, if the King withdraw his Favour, nor is there any cauſe to give the Eccleſiaſtical Commiſſioners any trouble about them; for as the Laws now are there are other Eccleſiaſtical Courts, which with the aid of the Juſtices at their Seſſions are ſufficiently impowred to Cenſure, Fine, Impriſon, Baniſh or Hang them for their Non-conformity to the Religion Eſtabliſhed by Law.

You exhort us *to ſee before we Leap, whether the Words in the Orders ſet forth in the* Gazett, *for contempt of his Majeſties Authority will run no further then juſt Mr* Penn *will have it.* And ask, *Can he ſtop the Current of it*

*when he pleases?* and say, *If he could, we are not sure he would; for formerly he had no great kindness (we know) for* his Baptists *and other* Dissenters, *and if he could and would we are not sure of his Life, how long; therefore it will be the greatest piece of Weakness and Folly in the World for us to Dance after his and the Jesuits Pipe alone, contrary both to all common Sence and Reason, and our own general Interest.*

*Anſ.* How do you make out your Inference, *That to do as you say is the greatest piece of Weakness and Folly?* I take it to be altogether as great folly to Dance after your Pipe in Company, contrary to common Sence, Reason and Interest, as after Mr *Penn* and the *Jesuites* alone; surely in this you take the *Dissenters* to be very forgetful of what their Senses so lately testified, when under the feeling Prosecution of *Penal Laws*, and to be unreasonably ignorant of their Interest in desiring those *Penal Laws* may be Repealed in Parliament, and a due *Liberty of Conscience* Established in their room. But for what cause do you reflect upon Mr *Penn?* I take it as a certain Evidence, that all Pamphlets on this Subject, that are interlaced with personal Reflections asserted on Surmises, without proof, are designed to promote Factious Dissentions, rather then to Unite in one common Interest, and heal our uncharitable Divisions. I have known Mr *Penn* for many Years, and have been credibly informed by others, that from his Age of Seventeen Years he has been an intimate Associate with the most eminent of *Dissenters*, that when he was of *Christ Church Colledge* in *Oxford*, he was fined for his dissent from the Religious Ceremonies of the Colledge: He suffered many Hardships in his Fathers Family on that account, has been a constant Advocate these Twenty Years for the Liberty we enjoy and hope to to have confirm'd: I have heard of many good Offices he has done at Court, both for *Dissenters* and *Conformists*; & that he has improved that Favour which has been shewn him by his Prince, both before and since his Ascending to the Throne, for the Benefit and not to the Prejudice of others: I have not known of any rich Presents or Rewards that have been given or required for any of his Services, or any Employments he seeks or accepts of. How his pleadings for *Liberty of Conscience* has or can tend to the improvement of his Revenues, I cannot apprehend neither; therefore if you will free your self from the suspition of an ill Design, and a groundless Asperſion, tho Mr *Penn* may be no Friend to such pretended *Baptists* and nominal *Dissenters* as you are; its incumbent on you to shew wherein he has manifested that he had formerly no great Kindness for those that are really such upon this account.

I pass by your trifling about the enlarging or limiting Authority by the power or will, length or shortness of Mr *Penn*'s Life, and proceed.

Thirdly

Thirdly, *To conſider above all what Security or Validity this* New Charter *can be of, when there is a ſtanding Army kept on Foot? Whether* Guns *will hear Reaſon,* or Dragoons *mind Charters or Arguments? your reference to their practice in* France, *if we are not ſtrangely Infatuated and given up to Ruin and Deſtruction; your Query whether their Carriage and Quartering will agree with a* New Charter *for Liberty, and if Mr* Penn *be a Friend to Liberty for Liberties ſake, you deſire an honeſt, clear nnd ſatisfactory Anſwer to theſe Three Points.*

In Mr *Penn*'s ſtead give me leave at preſent to return you an anſwer, by asking you ſome Queſtions; Is the *Weſtern Rebellion*, ſlipt out of your mind? Was there no occaſion given for multiplying *Dragoons*? Is *Soveraign Power* ſo limited by our Laws, as that it cannot make uſe of ſuch means as are of apparent and abſolute neceſſity for its own preſervation? Did you ever know of any *Army* wherein no diſſorders were committed in their Marches, or Quarterings? Are our *Dragoons* without any diſcipline, for reforming or puniſhing abuſes when they are complained of?

Do you, aud ſuch as follow your Examples, take a right courſe to avoid ſuch miſchiefs, being done in *England* by *Dragoons*, as are committed in *France*? I am as far from defending any of their diſorders, or deſiring their continuance longer then needs muſt, as I am from believing you to be a *Baptiſt*.

But ſure I am, whatever you are, your Reaſonings are very unſavory, and unſafe, tending to faſten us under that Bondage, you ſeemingly adviſe us to avoid; for to deal plainly and honeſtly with you, (as you deſire Mr *Penn* to do) I ſee no way to eſcape the diſſorders that are either felt or feared, but by giving His *Majeſty* full ſatisfaction, not only of our Fidelity, but of our Affection alſo to his Perſon and Government, in complying with what he ſhall propoſe, for maintenance of the *National Religion*, and all the poſſeſſions of the *Clergy*, as Eſtabliſhed by Law, and aboliſhing all ſuch Penalties for Non-conformity to the *National Religion*, as may be found inconſiſtent with the common Right and Reaſon of *Mankind*, Doctrines of *Chriſtianity* and Intereſt of *England*.

I ſhall now conſider your cloſing points (1) *In the mean time it appears to be highly the Duty of all Men as well Diſſenters as others, who have Votes in chooſing Parliament-Men, above all to chooſe ſuch Faithful Patriots as will take care of theſe things already hinted, and others that may be brought before them; that our Liberties, our Laws, and our Lives may be preſerved from ill deſigning Men, and from future* Quo Warranto's, *and all the high Violaters and Infringers thereof called to accompt, and juſtly puniſhed; this will well become them, and ſecure us, more then any titular Charter whatſoever.*

If you had only adviſed the chooſing Faithful Patriots for Parliament-Men, without cutting out their Work, your advice might have been ſound; or if you had only looked forwards that our Liberties, and our Lives might be preſerved from ill deſigning Men; and our Laws ſo ſettled, that all good Subjects may equally ſhare in the benefit of them; your Advice might have been ſeaſonable; for it is evident that our Circumſtances require as wiſe and moderate Men, experienced in civil and Religious affairs, as every *Parliament* in *England* did; and if the Nation be bleſs'd with ſuch a Choice in the next *Parliament*, all ſober perſons, may by their wiſe Councels be out of fear of ſuffering Prejudice by future accidents of State: But at this juncture to talk of calling to an Accompt, and puniſhing all ſuch as you may reckon high Violaters and Infringers of our Laws and Liberties is very unſeaſonable: Pray tell us ſince you undertake to Chalk out the way for a *Parliament*, and propoſe the Work you would have done by them, how far they are to look back, and where and with what ſort of Men you would have them begin; with ſuch of the *Clergy*, or of the *Lawyers*, as were the firſt Advancers of Prerogative above your meaſures; or with the *Diſſenters* for thankfully accepting the *Kings Indulgence*, and making uſe of the Liberty he has been pleaſed to grant in their peaceable and Religious Aſſemblies? after ſo many Convulſions in the State, Plots and Counter-plots as we have known in our Age. The ſame things to be liable to Penalties at one ſeaſon, which at another time have been marks of the greateſt Loyalty; ſober Men cannot but think it is high time to adhere to, and perſue thoſe Royal Methods, that have been with good ſucceſs begun, and are propoſed to be ſettled on terms of laſting ſecurity and Peace.

If the Caſe ſhould be propoſed to any Aſſembly (your ſelf being in the company) in reference to any Man that you can mark out as it was by the *Jewes*, in reference to the *Adultereſs* before our *Saviour*, *That he who is without Fault ſhould caſt the firſt Stone*, your ſuppoſed Criminal might eſcape by the Aſſemblys going out one by one, from the Eldeſt to the laſt convict in their own Conſciences; and if you ſhould have the confidence to ſtay behind the reſt, it might be no good evidence of an awaken'd Conſcience; but if Peace-makers have ſingular marks of favour always attending them, certainly ſuch worthy Patriots as at this ſeaſon ſhall be found in that Work, repairing our Breaches, healing our Diviſions, ſetling our Civil and Religious concerns, that whoever will conſcientiouſly diſcharge his duty to *God*, his *King* and his *Neighbour*, may not only enjoy Peace and Truth in his Days, but leave it on like terms as a Bleſſing

to

to his Poſterity, will deſerve the higheſt marks of favour from all good Men, and may therein alſo expect a Bleſſing from Heaven.

*Liberty*, ſay you, *is indeed a Fine Word, but Remember Brethren what the Apoſtle* Peter *hath told us*, **That ſome there were, that while they promiſe them Liberty they themſelves are the Servants of Corruption**? *And Obſerve what Follows*; **For of whom a Man is overcome, of the ſame he is brought in Bondage**, And then you ask (I ſuppoſe Mr. *Penn* or my ſelf) *How Do You*. **How will you like that Word**?

*Anſwer*, I like it as part of Holy writ, Teaching me (1) Not to abuſe that Liberty whereunto I am called by the Goſpel, (2) To prize that Liberty in the Goſpel which is indulged me by my *Soveraign* and to promote what in me lyes, the Eſtabliſhing of it by a *New Charter* (3) Not to hearken to you, or any, which perhaps did never feel the want of this Liberty, and would miſguide me, and take an Occaſion to deceive me of it, by talking of Liberties of another Sort which ſignifie nothing to me or any other Conſcientious *Diſſenters*, if we be deprived of this (4) as inducing me (for the better underſtanding of the Text you cite) to conſider the Context by which I am caution'd not to hearken to any ſuch, as promiſe me Liberty, who are themſelves *overcome by, and in Bondage to their own Fleſhly poluting Luſts*, (5) as inſtructing me by certain Characters to diſcern what ſort of Perſons they are who (by enticing Words) would beguile me of my Liberty; chiefly ſuch as deſpiſe Government, are Preſumptious, and not afraid to ſpeak *Evil* of Dignities: And with this ſhort Paraphraſe, I may after your Example, ask, *How do You*; *Or how will you like that word?*

In this I agree with what you ſay, *The Name of Liberty ſignifies nothing without the Subſtance. And that which the Diſſenters deſire and endeavour after, is that ſuch a Liberty may be obtained, and ſecured by a* New Charter *to Perpetuity as is ſubſtantial*: But in this we may differ, if you think a preſent Liberty ſignifies nothing, for it is now, and will be at all times, ſo long as we can enjoy it, the preſent comfort of our Lives, and of ſo great value, that I think he that has felt the want of it, will not eaſily be enticed to make a Forfeiture of his preſent Liberty, by taking any ſuch courſe as you ſteer to *Secure Penal Laws* for Coertion of Conſcience under the Name of *Subſtantial and Engliſh Liberties*, If theſe *Penal Lawes be the Gooſe* you adviſe us not to part with for ſticking down a Feather; and the Bird in the Hand, I cannot Gueſs how you came to be a *Baptiſt*; ſure I am you do not ſhew your ſelfe in the Colours of an *Engliſh Anabaptiſt*, for your courſe tends to the binding of Heavy Burthens on their and other *Diſſenters* Shoulders, which its moſt likely you never did, nor

I will touch with one of your Fingers.

You exhort us, *To be of one mind as Brethren, to let Brotherly Love and Charity continue*, and tell us, *nothing will ſave us but Union.* Pray take your part in the Exhortation let Brotherly Love have a beginning (for I fear that is not yet ſettled between us) and then I doubt not but the profitable Experience of the Exerciſe of it will give it a continuance; If you are for uniting, be content to part with thoſe Offenſive Weapons that have cauſed our diviſions, let our Civil Liberties as Men, and our Religious Liberties as Chriſtians be ſettled upon ſure Foundations, let temporal penalties, for diſſent in ſpirituals be ſet aſide, and the hard Names of Sedition, Felony Treaſon be ſever'd from ſuch things as are in no manner offenſive to the Civil Goverment, but meer Opinions, and peaceable Exerciſes ſubſequent in matters of Religion. Let us learn to be kindly affectionate and Compaſſionate as Men and Neighbours ought to be one to another, whether *True Believers, Miſbelievers, or Unbelievers*, and then there will be no ground to fear that the Corruptions or projects of *Rome, Geneva, France, Holland*, or any thing elſe ſhould ever diſ-unite us, or be able to gain any advantage by attempting to ſow amongſt us the Seeds of Diſſention.

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*FINIS.*